



Behind banner, from L to R: Alvaro Carranza, Resident Engineer; Jan Smith representing Senator Cathie Wright; Ginger Gherardi, Ventura County Transportation Commission; Chief Bill Brown, CHP Northern Division; Tony V. Harris, District Director; Cameron Smythe, representing Senator William Knight; Norman Walker, representing Assemblyman Tom McClintock; David Foy, representing Congressman Howard McKeon; Rondi Golden, representing Assemblyman Tony Strickland; Alan Salazar, Chumash Indian spiritual advisor; Beverly Folks, representing Chumash Indians. In front of banner, L to R: Mayor JoAnne Darcy, City of Santa Clarita; Mayor Evaristo Barajas, City of Fillmore.

## Highway 126 Widening Completes Early; Ceremony Draws Crowd

February 2 marked the early, official completion of the final phase of an extensive 32-mile road widening project on Highway 126 between Ventura and Los Angeles counties. The eagerly anticipated celebration drew about 100 attendees, including elected officials, members of the community, members of the Chumash Indians and the media. The final phase involved a 5.3-mile stretch of highway from the Los Angeles/Ventura County line to I-5 near Santa Clarita. Work began on the \$16.5 million project on April 15, 1997, and was completed four months ahead of schedule.

Tony V. Harris, former District Director, said "This is rugged terrain in this area

and with a lot of concern for drainage, we wanted to get as much of it completed before the heavy rains. A lot of credit for this work goes to the contractor, Granite Construction of Palmdale." Contractors on previous phases of the project included Security Paving, Chumo Construction Company, Clark Construction Company and Kasler Corporation.

Harris added, "The success of the overall project was due to the cooperation and support of the community, local elected officials and all of our business and transportation partners. The project should benefit commuters traveling on Highway 126."

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## 210 Groundbreaking In Claremont For 1st Of 5 Bridge Projects

*By Rick Holland*

February 2 marked the beginning of work on the first of five bridge construction projects on the Foothill Freeway (210) for Los Angeles County. Indian Hill Boulevard and Towne Avenue will be the first structures (overcrossings) to be built. Work is also underway on the 15/30 Interchange in San Bernardino County.

As part of the ceremony, Tony V. Harris, Chief Deputy Director of the department, along with Senator Richard Mountjoy; Assemblyman Bob Margett; Supervisor Michael Antonovich; and Mayor Suzan Smith of Claremont unveiled a new Route 210 sign to replace the old Route 30 sign. Harris said, "When work on the 210 Freeway completes in 2002, commuters will have a direct link between the two counties. With job and population growth in the area expected to double over the next decade, this project will help serve the needs of the entire region."

Assemblyman Margett said, "The important aspect of local government meeting with Caltrans to resolve freeway construction issues was of great concern to me. Now that it has been accomplished, this vital link can be completed relieving congestion our commuters face." Mayor Smith said, "We in Claremont greet the start of construction with a mixture of satisfaction, excitement and a little anxiety. Satisfaction,

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# 210 Groundbreaking

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because we've been able to work with Caltrans to design a freeway that has as little negative impact on our residents as possible. Excitement, because it brings us that much closer to improving the flow of commuter traffic through our community. And anxiety, because this construction will undoubtedly create some significant impacts on our community while it's underway. We look forward to continuing to work closely with Caltrans during construction to make sure this project goes as smoothly and quickly as possible."

In preparation for the work, Indian Hill Boulevard closed the week of February 15. Towne Avenue is scheduled to close the first week of March. The two streets will remain closed during construction. Once the Towne Avenue and Indian Hill Boulevard overcrossings are completed (in six to eight months), the streets will be reopened to traffic. Detours will then be set up for Mountain and Mills Avenues. Once the detours are in place, Mountain and Mills will be fully closed. The closures

will allow construction to begin at the Thompson Creek Bridge and the Mountain and Mills overcrossings. When completed, Mountain and Mills will be closed to traffic. However, Sumner Avenue will become a cul-de-sac and remain closed.

In April, seven structures in La Verne will go out to bid. These include three vehicle overcrossings at Wheeler Avenue, Emerald Avenue and Fruit Street; two pedestrian overcrossings at Bixby Drive and Chelsea Drive; and two flume structures at Marshall Canyon Wash and Emerald Wash.

Harris thanked the community and elected officials for their patience and support of the project. He also gave special thanks to Assemblyman Margett and Winchell's World for refreshments; Home Depot who provided the stage and canopies; and Hometown Rentals who loaned-out tables and chairs for the event.

He said, "Caltrans will do everything possible to minimize disruption to all concerned along the corridor. We will try to make our presence as invisible as possible."

C. C. Meyers of Rancho Cordova is the contractor on the first five structures.

Estimated cost of the work is \$10 million.



## Rick Holland: Former Editor Of Inside Seven Takes On Route 210 Project

Effective March 1, Rick Holland, former editor of Inside 7, began working full time on the Route 210 project. His duties include acting as liaison between the public and Caltrans at the Route 210 field office in La Verne. He will assist residents who live in the area regarding issues of property management, relocations, acquisitions and other public queries. In addition, Holland will represent Caltrans at community meetings. He will be stationed at the field office at least four to five days per week.

Holland held the position of editor of Inside 7 since 1996. He said, "During my tenure as editor, I met a lot of nice folks. My job as editor was very enjoyable." He added, "However, I look forward to the new and exciting tasks that lie ahead with the Route 210 project."

The best of luck to Rick in his new assignment!

Jeanne Bonfilio has replaced Rick as Editor. For additional information, or to share ideas about articles for publication, she can be reached at extension 7-3630.



Assisting in the groundbreaking ceremony were, from L to R: Mayor Susan Smith, City of Claremont; Assemblyman Bob Margett; Senator Richard Mountjoy; Supervisor Michael Antonovich; Mehdi Raffiee, Caltrans Asst. Resident Engineer; Hassan Azima, Caltrans Asst. Resident Engineer; Tony V. Harris, Caltrans Chief Deputy; and Kal Lambaz, Caltrans Resident Engineer



# Quality Corner

*Caltrans* THE LEADER IN QUALITY TRANSPORTATION

## Refugio Dominguez Named 1999 District Quality Coordinator

In order to ensure that all District Divisions are involved in the continuing Caltrans quality effort, the roles and responsibilities of leading the district Quality Program are being rotated on an annual basis. This year, the division of Design has the lead.

On February 9, Refugio Dominguez, Senior Transportation Engineer in Branch D, was appointed the new District Quality Coordinator of 1999 by Tony V. Harris, Chief Deputy Director. As last year's Quality Coordinator for Design, Dominguez brings a wealth of knowledge and insight regarding the needs and importance of the district's Quality Program.

Dominguez said, "I would like to thank Tony Harris and the executive staff for this opportunity to work with my fellow employees in applying quality principles and new ideas to keep Caltrans at the

highest quality level."

According to Dominguez, there are at least three important goals he hopes to achieve this year: Continue with the Caltrans Quality courses offered to employees, with emphasis on quality as part of every employee's daily work; continue with the existing excellent quality teams, as well as create new teams to bring fresh ideas to make Caltrans a better workplace; and make sure all employees understand how important responsibility and attitude are to the quality of their work.

Dominguez hopes to accomplish his goals through quarterly meetings and updates in the Inside 7 employee newsletter. Also, he will be working with a Quality Steering Committee to make certain his quality goals are met.

Refugio added, "With the support of the Quality Steering Committee and the



division coordinators, I am confident our goals will be reached."

District 7 welcomes Refugio Dominguez to his new position, and extends the best of luck to him in his role as District Quality Coordinator.

## Welcome Nate Cradle, New Maintenance South Region Manager



A warm Caltrans welcome to Nathaniel "Nate" Cradle, the new Maintenance Region Manager for the South Region, who assumed his new duties March 2. With over 23 years in Caltrans Maintenance, Nate is very well suited to his new position.

It all began for Cradle on November 1, 1977, when he started working for Caltrans as a Landscape Maintenance Worker in Banning, where he remained for one year. He held several positions over the next few years, ending up in Needles (District 8) as a Maintenance Supervisor, where he worked for five years. In 1990, he was granted a promotion to a Maintenance Superintendent for District 4 (San Francisco) and spent five years there. After working two additional years as a landscape specialist, he ended up in Napa as an Area Superintendent in

1997, where he remained until his transfer here to District 7.

Mike Miles, Chief, Division of Maintenance, said, "I am very happy to have Nate Cradle working at District 7. He brings many years of experience, as well as a positive attitude, to his new position. I am looking forward to working with Nate."

Cradle will supervise some 200 employees. In addition to freeway maintenance, his area of responsibility includes maintenance and operation of the draw bridge at Terminal Island.

While in District 4, part of his jurisdiction included maintenance and operation of two ferry boats and six draw bridges.

Cradle said, "I really appreciate this opportunity to work at the Maintenance South Region of District 7. Mike Miles is an excellent manager, and there is a really great group of people here. I feel like I am sitting on top of a gold mine."

Caltrans extends best wishes to Nate in his new position.

# Angeles Crest Highway — Ride Easy; Ride Safe

Caltrans, the California Highway Patrol and the Forest Service joined forces March 12 at a press conference sponsored by the Trauma Center of Huntington Memorial Hospital in Pasadena. The community awareness event was to alert motorists and other users of Angeles Crest Highway (2) to drive safely! slowly! and sober! In the past two years, 13 people have been killed in motorcycle-related accidents on Route 2.

Some improvements made to Route 2 by District 7's Maintenance staff include pavement resurfacing; chip seal; metal beam guardrail upgrade; high reflectivity striping; and turnout/passing lane. In addition, "Daily roadway inspection is performed by Caltrans to remove fallen rocks and other debris," said Ed Toledo, Area Supervisor.

"Three electronic changeable message signs will be installed in the near future at the bottom of Route 210 and in Palmdale



Front row from left: Dr. Cesar Aristeiguieta of Huntington Memorial Hospital, Captain Bill Whiteside of CHP, Frank Quon, Caltrans Operations Division Chief, Connie Matthews, P.R. Director at podium and Dr. Dirk de Brito of Huntington Memorial Hospital.

and Wrightwood. The purpose of the signs is to notify travelers of closures, icy conditions and to heed safety messages," said Frank Quon, Division Chief of Operations.



Seated: Chuck Shamblain, Forest Service.  
Speaker: Graham Forman, Aide to Assemblyman Jack Scott.  
Standing at right: Ed Toledo, Caltrans Area Supervisor of Rte. 2.



Dr. Cesar Aristeiguieta of Huntington Memorial Hospital at podium.  
In the background at the trucks are from left Traffic's Sam Esquenazi, Mel Daida and Carl Perez in striped vest.





## Equal Opportunity Corner

### Sexual Harassment: What You Need To Know

**H**ave you ever experienced any of the following situations at work? Suggestive comments about your appearance; unwanted touching or other physical contact; unwanted sexual jokes or comments; and/or sexual advances or exposure to inappropriate visual material? If you have experienced any unwanted verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, you are not alone. This behavior is considered sexual harassment. It is not only offensive, but against the law.

The law states that sexual harassment is unwanted repeated sexual attention at work. It is illegal if your job depends on you going along with this behavior or the harassment creates a hostile or offensive work environment which interferes with the ability to do your job. "No one should be subjected to this type of behavior ... everyone has a right to a workplace free from harassment," states Equal Opportunity (EO) Officer, Cathi McMahan.

Cathi further explained, "Sexual harassment is not a person's fault. We encourage those who believe they have been harassed to come forward so we can help put a stop to this behavior and resolve the matter further." Employees are advised to follow these steps:

Tell the harasser to stop. Inform the harasser that his/her attentions are unwanted and the behavior is offensive.

Document the incident. Write down each incident including the date, times and places.

Inform your supervisor and/or the EO Officer. Use the informal discrimination complaint process. Information about the process is on the Equal Opportunity bulletin board located on the third floor of the annex building.

How is sexual harassment eliminated from the workplace? Prevention is the key. Become familiar with the department's Equal Opportunity and Sexual

Harassment policies. If you are a supervisor, periodically review the policies with your employees, and distribute them to all new employees. Contribute to a sexual harassment-free work environment by setting a positive example. Everyone has the responsibility of treating colleagues and employees with dignity, respect and sensitivity.

What individuals don't realize is that sexual harassment isn't about intentions; it's about the effect on another person. It's your right to work in an environment free from sexual harassment; and it is also your responsibility to help build a workplace free from this type of behavior. To reiterate and enforce our policies, the Office of Equal Opportunity is working to educate and inform supervisors and employees about their responsibility to comply with the laws and policies. How? The EO Office has initiated "Equal Opportunity and Sexual Harassment Prevention Training" for managers and supervisors. It is ongoing until all Division Managers and Supervisors are trained. This is required training. In addition, the District will soon be conducting training of all employees via a mandated four-hour training workshop covering sexual harassment and diversity. This training is being given statewide.

We want to reiterate the importance of contributing to a professional work force free of harassment. This will ensure a productive and effective work environment, one we can all be proud of. In the event, though, that sexual harassment occurs, we want to stress the importance of immediately reporting this to your immediate supervisor and/or the Equal Opportunity Officer.

Let's respect each other by making District 7 an even more professional and happy place to be!



*Interim District Director, Bob Sassaman*

### Bob Sassaman Named Interim District Director

**E**ffective February 5, Robert W. Sassaman was named Interim District 7 Director, replacing Tony V. Harris who was appointed Chief Deputy Director of Caltrans. Since 1995, Sassaman has held the position of Chief Deputy Director of District 7. He has twice before held the Interim District Director position during transition periods.

Originally hired at District 7 as a junior civil engineer in July of 1962, Sassaman has held a variety of positions in the district. These included: Design Project Engineer of the 118/405 Freeway interchange; Chief, Resource Management branch; Chief, Project Management branch; Chief, Hydraulics, Engineering Services; Chief, Management Services branch; and Deputy District Director of Administration.

Sassaman said, "It is a pleasure to again follow in the footsteps of another very fine District Director. My hope is that the next District Director stays longer."

Sassaman brings extensive experience and knowledge to this position. District 7 wishes him the best during his tenure as the Interim District Director.

# Highway 126

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Under a white canopy, with a breath-taking robin's egg-blue sky on a beautiful winter morning, over 50 chairs were filled with guests, and an additional standing-room-only crowd behind them in anticipation of the final opening ceremony.

The widening project began 15 years ago on Highway 126 in the small city of Santa Paula in Ventura county. The picturesque highway is an important, vital stretch of road linking Los Angeles to Ventura, and has been a favorite of motorists for years.

The scenic area features miles of rolling green hills, fruit-and-nut stands, citrus groves and other agriculture. At a total cost of \$60.3 million, the project was a massive undertaking expanding Highway

126 along the winding route. According to the California Highway Patrol (CHP), between 1992 and 1997 there were 49 deaths and 825 injuries on the stretch of highway. "There were all too many tragic fatal accidents occurring on this roadway," said CHP Chief Bill Brown of the Ventura Headquarters.

However, what was once a two-lane road with nothing separating the two way traffic except for a double yellow line, the highway now has a spacious median, raised highway pavement markers for safety and wide shoulders.

As part of the giant project, significant right-of-way acquisitions were necessary along with utility relocations. Bridges and drainage systems were added, and a 40-mile-per-hour curve was eliminated. Over 130,000 tons of asphalt/concrete were used, and more than half-a-million cubic yards of earth removed.

Unanticipated ground water was discovered, and storm delays threatened to hinder progress. Even so, the project was finished ahead of schedule.

Speakers at the event included local elected officials from both Los Angeles and Ventura Counties; representatives from the Ventura County Transportation Commission; The Newhall Land and Farming Company; the California Highway Patrol; Caltrans; and members of the Chumash Indians whose ancestors once inhabited the area adjacent to the highway.

In addition, Harris applauded the efforts of the Highway 126 Safety Corridor Task Force led by Ventura County Supervisor Kathy Long. The Task Force was developed during the project to improve motorist's safety along the popular route. The U. S. Office of Traffic Safety funded the Task Force.

The event included an official banner cutting, refreshments with the compliments of The Newhall Land and Farming Company, and a special blessing ceremony led by Chumash Indian spiritual leader, Alan Salazar. As part of the ceremony, Salazar burned sage in an abalone shell, sang a traditional Chumash blessing song and sprinkled tobacco and sage near the highway.

The celebration received wide media attention. News coverage of the event was aired on channels 2, 4, 5 and 7 as well as stories appearing in the Los Angeles Times and its Ventura County edition, the Daily News and its Simi Valley edition, the Newhall Signal, the Moorpark Star, and others.

Highway 126 is located approximately 45 minutes from downtown Los Angeles; about a five-minute drive past Magic Mountain off of the Golden State Freeway (I-5).

The roadway improvements are well worth a drive, weekday or weekend.



*Alan Salazar, Chumash Indian Sprirtual Advisor*





From left: Mel Daida, Sam Esquenazi and Carl Perez

## Mel Daida And Carl Perez: Caltrans Drivers On The Move

**M**el Daida and Carl Perez, Transportation Engineering Technicians, are two employees who drive vehicles that most people will never drive in a lifetime: Portable Electronic Changeable Message Sign trucks. Daida and Perez use a computerized system in the trucks to “flash” critical information to motorists as a situation warrants.

Their duties include incident response, planned lane closures and special events. And they are dedicated to their specialty.

Perez has been in the position for about a year, and Daida has been with Traffic since the early 70's.

Ray Higa, Chief, Office of District Traffic said, “Mel and Carl are excellent employees who are independent, resourceful and reliable. They are very concerned employees and focus their attention on improving traffic flow and enhanced safety with less inconvenience to the public.”

According to their supervisor, Sam Esquenazi, Senior Transportation Engineer, Traffic Management Team, “Mel and Carl make me look good by performing their jobs so well. They both exemplify Quality Service at Caltrans.”

Thank you, Mel and Carl, for your out-

standing performance at the March 12 media event spotlighting safe driving on Angeles Crest Highway. The slogans you programmed on your signs were a big hit with the media.

## Bits & Pieces.....

Harmer E. Davis, founder of what is now the University of California Institute of Transportation Studies, died at age 93 on December 24, 1998, in Walnut Creek, California. Davis, a pioneer in highway engineering, began the nation's first program which combined research and training in the field. His students upgraded California's roads and airports in the years after World War II. Davis' model was later copied by several states.

**QUESTION:**  
When will work on the Mail Room be completed?

**ANSWER:**  
By the end of March.

## Bring A Child To Work Day, April 29

**T**he date for this year's Bring a Child to Work Day is Thursday, April 29. Suggested ages of participant children are 6 through 16. Participants are not limited to relatives. Any child who an employee feels would benefit from the Caltrans work experience is welcome.

On the agenda for the day's events are tours of the Transportation Management Center; a display of maintenance vehicles in the Main Street parking lot; and taking part in a teleconference from Headquarters. Certificates of participation and children's Caltrans hard hats will be given to each child, and door prizes will be awarded. In addition, a group lunch will be offered for a nominal fee. Details will be forthcoming.

Watch for additional information via e-mail, the Silent Radio and upcoming Informational Notices. Everyone is encouraged to participate in this worthwhile event!

For more information, contact Cathi McMahan, Equal Opportunity Officer, at extension 7-0597.

**QUESTION:**  
When will the High Occupancy Vehicle Lane (HOV) project from Sand Canyon to Escondido Canyon near Santa Clarita be finished?

**ANSWER:**  
Weather permitting, mid- to late summer.

Southern California Rideshare, the oldest such agency in the nation, is marking its 25th anniversary. The organization estimates that since its inception, its efforts to encourage people to commute by car-pool have saved 77 million gallons of gas and eliminated almost 35,000 tons of vehicle emissions. It's a good reminder that even for those who can't share rides regularly, any ride that is “shared” helps. If you would like to give it a try, information is available by calling 1-800-COMMUTE.

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Apr. 99	Rte. 134 Arroyo Seco Bridge Seismic Retrofit - Estimated Completion 4/99
April 16,17,18	City of Los Angeles 1999 Preparedness Fair L.A. Zoo North Parking Lot, Griffith Park
April 21	Invitation from Long Beach City College to Participate in the Non-Traditional Career Day for 1999
April 22	Meeting, Westwood Village Rotary Club @ Bel Air Hotel - 12:15 p.m.
April 23, 24, 25	Maintenance, West Region, Camping Jamboree Leo Carrillo State Beach - Call 805-389-1565
April 28	Workers Memorial Day - A day to honor fallen Caltrans Workers
April 29	Bring A Child to Work Day

# The Trading Post

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